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Poetry.

BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK.

There is a solemn question,
To which I must reply;
Shall I accept the Savior,
Or all his claims deny?
Behold, he standeth knocking
Upon my bosom door,
Perhaps if now he ceaseth,
'Twill be for evermore.
Oh, shall I now receive him,
Accept him and believe him?
Or shall I now refuse to hear,
And bid him go away!

How long he hath been waiting,
My heart alone can tell;
How patiently entreating,
My conscience knoweth well.
What words of solemn warning,
What promises of love,
His voice hath ever pleaded,
My stony heart to move.
Oh, shall I now receive him, etc.

The question must be answered,
The time will soon be past;
It will not do to-morrow,
To-day may be my last.
I either must reject him,
And choose the world of sin,
Or open freely to him,
And bid him enter in.
Oh, shall I now receive him, etc.

Oh, on that awful morning,
When he upon his throne,
Shall summon all before him
Who life on earth have known;
How shall I stand before him,
And look upon his face,
If, while he here entreatheth,
I scorn his offered grace?
Oh, shall I now receive him, etc.
—Archibald Alexander Stevenson.

Religious.

APOSTOLIC MISSIONS: THE GOSPEL FOR EVERY CREATURE.

BY JOSEPH ANGUS, D. D.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."—Mark xvi. 15.

(Concluded.)

Carefully mark once more what the duty is, and how, in the light of the Gospels and of the Acts, it is to be fulfilled. In the three years of our Lord's ministry he travelled three times over Galilee. Three times he travelled through Judea and visited Jerusalem. He preached for weeks at Capernaum, his home, and a border town where many were coming and going. Six months he labored in Persæ; twice, at least he was in Samaria. Twice he sent out disciples—the twelve—the seventy; and in all these districts there were believers—hundreds of them though no church was yet formed. Such was his three years' work—an itinerant home ministry—among perhaps three millions of people. In five and twenty years Paul travelled three times over a great part of Asia Minor and Europe. Twice he was kept as prisoner for two years—at Caesarea and at Rome, preaching to all who came to him, and especially to successive soldiers to whom he was chained. At one place he wintered; at another he spent a year and a half; at a third two whole years. If churches were formed, he encouraged others from among the churches themselves to take the oversight of them, sending written instructions for their government. Those instructions are now the inspired handbooks, which we give in a printed form to our converts, and which are, under God, the means of the growth and permanence of our societies. This missionary rented buildings and used the houses of those who were disposed to receive him. He took nothing of the Gentiles, i. e., of the unconverted; but gratefully acknowledged the gifts of all fellow Christians who ministered to his necessities, and yet was ready to work with his own hands, that he might preach a free Gospel, and maintain his character for disinterested independence. In this spirit he travelled from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum, fully preaching by his life and by his words the Gospel

of Christ. Fellow helpers he found or made wherever he went; so that within thirty years after the ascension, the sound of the voice of the first preachers—the music of their message as the terms imply—had gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. And I believe it demonstrable that with Apostles, Messengers of the Churches, Missionaries, as we call them, of a like spirit, we are able to do for our world, in the way of preaching, more than Paul and the Apostles did for the world of their day.

To the extent of our ability we are to preach it, and we can preach it to all. Take the least favorable case. Suppose that this work is to be done by members of Churches in Christendom only, i. e., in Europe and America. We might need fifty thousand preachers, and their support might amount to ten or fifteen millions a year for ten years. In that time, and by such an agency the Gospel be preached, and preached repeatedly to every man woman and child on earth!

It seems a great company—fifty thousand preachers. And yet the number is not more than one per cent., of our Evangelical Church members. Three or four out of every hundred members of Baptist Churches in England and America would yield all we need. England sent as many men to the Crimea to take a single fortress and to keep up for a few years a Mohammedan despotism. Ten times the number of men fell on both sides in the great American war, to set free three or four millions of slaves. Five hundred years ago the crusades had cost more lives, and they sought to win from men well nigh as chivalrous as the invaders, a material Jerusalem and an earthly "sovereignty." And cannot fifty thousand redeemed men be found to win back the world to Jesus Christ? Have our hymns no meaning?

"O send ten thousand heralds forth,
From east to west, from south to north,
To blow the trump of Jubilee,
And peace proclaim from sea to sea."

It seems a great sum—a hundred and fifty millions in ten years—yet it is less than three pounds a year from each member of Evangelical Churches in Europe and America. England alone spends as much as the whole hundred and fifty millions every two years on intoxicating drinks. The blessings of civil government, imperial and local, cost Britain every year two-thirds of the whole sum. The Crimean war cost a hundred millions; the American war more than ten times as much. An annual tax of tenpence in the pound on the income of Great Britain alone would yield the fifteen millions we need. Nay, more: It would be easy to find ten thousand professing Christians who could give it all!

Looking only at men and money, is it not self-evident that it can be done?

But, in fact, the process is less costly than I have supposed. In America and England, and generally on the continent of Europe, the Gospel might be preached—fully and tenderly—without much more cost than the loving personal labours of our Church members. In India there are, say, one hundred and fifty millions of heathen. Suppose that we could send out at once three thousand men, who should each spend a couple of years in learning one language or more, and go for eight years or ten of work. They might gather around them, or get from existing Churches, three thousand more—plain men or women, competent to preach the Gospel with tenderness and power. And then in ten years the Gospel might be preached, and preached repeatedly, to all India. The entire cost of such an agency for ten years, and for six thousand agents, need not amount to fifteen millions. Five thousand men sent in the same way to China, might in the same time, evangelize the whole country. It can be done.

I have not forgotten the difficulties of all kinds that surround this enterprise—travel, health, unknown regions, barbarous tribes, the great wrath of one who perceives that his time is short. I know, or can imagine, them all. But I venture to say that, whatever these

difficulties, they would be overcome if England's national honor were at stake; if diamond-beds or gold-fields of sufficient value had been discovered—nay, if even a Nile were to be traced and mapped. Is there a part of the earth that Englishmen could not penetrate, for a consideration? And shall Christ's command, and the world's needs, fail to move? I repeat it—*It can be done!*

The recommendations of some such plan so simple and comprehensive—the preaching of the Gospel and *nothing more*, to every creature and *nothing less*—are clear and decisive.

There is, first of all, the Divine command and the Divine example. Education is of value; so is the relief of distress; the relief of suffering; so are canals and railroads and commerce, the implements of a material civilization. We honor them all; but they are most honoured when made subservient to the Gospel. When the blessed God stepped forth from his place, as philanthropist, he gave His law, and prophets, and sent His Son. And now all the improvement he works begins in human hearts, and is to spread from within outwardly till all is renewed. There are, be assured, profound reasons, as there is a Divine command, to justify the announcement that the preaching of the Gospel is the first business of the Christian Church.

Some such comprehensive plan, moreover will have the advantage of proving to the world that we believe what we profess, viz. that the Gospel is God's remedy for human misery and sinfulness, and that it is the Church's honor to make it known. Everyone sees that our present agencies, with their million a year, for the evangelization of eight hundred millions of people, do not mean business; and there is, in consequence, widespread infidelity in relation to the Gospel and in relation to the sincerity of the Christian Church herself. . . . What an answer it would be to Rationalism and Secularism and Sectarianism, and Popery and Infidelity, in all their forms; and what a healthy confirmation of our own faith, if the Evangelical churches of Christendom were to resolve, in God's strength, to preach the Gospel to every creature! It would be the fitting reply at once to Papal Infallibility and to Rationalistic unbelief.

And how our work would simplify and extend if we confined it to this business of preaching the Gospel. Many men would be found of every class and of various social positions, competent to do this work, but not competent to become pastors, and not caring to take upon them the business-labors of many modern missionaries—good men, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost. Nay, might not our best men—our laymen and pastors—whether young or old, be prepared to give five years or ten, or parts of every year, to this specific work, who are not prepared to become missionaries for life, in the common meaning of the term. What enormous anxieties would be spared us in connexion with mission buildings and churches and schools—the dead weight of many existing agencies. All these things would come in time, but they would come independently of those who make it their business to preach the Gospel. Churches could be formed by thousands; but they would be left to their New Testament, and to native pastors, being commended, not selfishly, but from enlightened conviction, "to God and to the word of His grace." A freer Christian life might be the result of such an arrangement; but the life would be more true, more natural, and, I believe, more abiding.

And what a blessing it would be to the heathen to find hundreds of men in their country all preaching substantially the same gospel, and all pointing for details of spiritual and ecclesiastical life to the same book!

It can be done. It is our duty to do it, and there will be the blessing even in the attempt. Yes, you say, in the attempt, but in any thing besides? Can we without miracles hope that men

*Thus ill. 4.

will believe? Is a message of human sinfulness, of Divine mercy, and of holiness—in one word, of Christ, and of Christ as crucified for us—likely to win men who have grown old in sin? Must we not rather keep to our schools and be content to elevate men by the gradual training of a few in each generation, till, centuries hence, the whole are trained? I think not. The contempt of the foolishness of our preaching has not yet died out. Signs, miracles are still deemed essential. Wisdom, education, is still sought for, as the precursor of the gospel or its substitute. Yet is the gospel more than a sign. It is power itself, and the power of God; and more than wisdom—it is the wisdom of God. Miracles have their place in introducing a new revelation, but they are not needed to justify us in preaching the Gospel, nor were they the means of the repentance and faith of the first converts. The truths we have to preach—man's guilt, God's free and righteous mercy, the necessity of holiness—still appeal to men's consciences and hearts as they did at Jerusalem and at Corinth; the preaching is still followed by "greater things" than Christ himself wrought; and, in short, the message of the Cross, delivered as it ought to be, with prayer and tears, is still the power of God; and our strength is in proclaiming it. Some will not believe, but multitudes will; and we shall have discharged our conscience and have obeyed our Lord. There will be a blessing in the attempt, and in much besides.

This, then, is the conclusion to which I come. If the Christian Church will give itself to this business of preaching the Gospel, it has wealth enough, and men enough to preach it in the next fifteen or twenty years, to every creature. All we need is a "willing mind," a Pentecostal spirit of prayer, and faith and zeal. Only expect what God promises to give, only attempt what God bids you to do, and the thing will be done.

But we are here to-day as a single society—what can we do? Does not this appeal address itself to the entire Church—to the dozen tribes of Israel, and not to what is in England one of the least of the tribes? No doubt it does address itself to all; but none the less to us. It was one of the least of the tribes that God honored of old. What you can do in this business depends entirely on what God disposes you to do; on what, speaking from the human side, you will do. Were Baptists the only Christians on earth, I believe they would have men and wealth sufficient to meet this call. But I am asking less at your hands. Do your share! "Fifty thousand men" means, forty from the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and five from Walworth Road, and five from this assembly. Fifteen millions a year means three pounds a year, on the average, from each of us. Do your share!

The Divine method of missions has been briefly marked out. Work to this model; make the preaching of the Gospel to every creature your ambition, your passion, as it was Paul's. Begin with your children and your friends. Continue in your business that you may have the more to give. Take it up as work, not as play.

If to-morrow our Committee were to resolve to help no pastors and aid no buildings, but restrict themselves and their agents to the double duty of preaching Christ to those who have never heard His name, and of giving His Word to the Church and to the world, they would make less change in their plans organization than any Society I know. This is largely their method now. Help them to keep to it and to carry it through. Let their resolution be to have hundreds of missionary evangelists with simple work, requiring few, though noble qualifications—love, insight, faith. And let our resolution be to give, not single guineas, but fives, tens and hundreds—sums we think we can ill spare; and let all give. And soon—the Lord hasten it!—His way will be known

on earth, and His saving health among all nations."

And yet it is not so much men we need, or money! Not so much demonstrations of the sufficiency of our wealth and numbers. What we most need in order to use the wealth we have and to send the men is a heart of warmer love—still greater tenderness and simplicity, more faith and more prayer; in short, the Holy Spirit in us and with us. All I have said on the power of preaching takes as granted that it is not we who speak, but God who speaks by us. The consciousness, the temper, and the reality of a Divine presence—is not this the great need of us all?

Yet is it less accessible than the men or the money? Nay, it is more accessible than either, and the only thing needed for the acquiring of both. If God gives us the Spirit—and can we doubt his willingness—nothing less essential will be withheld!

Make your contributions to-night something like an adequate expression of your appreciation of God's method of improving and saving men; let them be the first fruits of more liberal gifts, the earnest of more devoted personal service, and of more fervent prayers in years to come. Amen and Amen.

REARING YOUNG BAPTISTS.

We may assume that all true Baptist parents teach and train their children in the faith they themselves hold. Many professed Baptists do not act so, as is painfully evident from the deficiencies so common among young people of Baptist parentage. But one worthy the name of a true Baptist will be true to the teachings he believes Jesus to have given. Here, then, is the first field on which young Baptists are to be reared. Children should in their own homes learn the supremacy of the Bible as a rule of faith and practice. They should learn that the New Testament is the sole and the sufficient constitution of a Baptist Church, that believers' baptism is the appointed way of professing Jesus and assuming the obligations of Church membership, that a rigidly held communion is the appointed means of keeping sharp and clear the line between the church and the world. In short, whatever warrants the existence of a Baptist Church should be taught to our children. If we are right in remaining in this denominational connection, we are right in teaching our reasons therefor.

But there are many children not under the care of true Baptists. If these are properly reared, it must be through the work of the church; and her chief agency for training the young is the Sunday-school. Here, then, must we find provision for teaching all truth. Have we it? Have we that clear knowledge among our teachers, and have we such arrangement of lesson topics and of lessons as will secure the indoctrination of the young? If we are thus equipped, let us use our equipments. If we are not so equipped, let us arise and bestir ourselves. God has made ample provision for thus qualifying us. The rearing of these young scholars is needful. Up, then, and at it, brethren; and the Head of the church will bless you abundantly. Then, too, as future generations rise to fill our places, they will be clear in doctrine and strong in faith! and these rolling on their influence, will for future generations achieve still more than the best of their predecessors ever did.—Baptist Teacher.

BISHOP STROSSMAYER'S SPEECH AT THE VATICAN COUNCIL.

The Guardian publishes a translation of the celebrated speech of Bishop Strossmayer at the Vatican Council. It has not appeared in English before. It has been recently published in Florence under the title of "The Pope and the Gospel." We cannot, as we peruse it, be much surprised at the commotion it excited. "Penetrated," he said, "with the feeling of responsibility